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Book Review: Vaqueros, Cowboys, and Buckaroos

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ship that examines the regional subtleties of the men who rode the cattle ranges of the West.

Jerald Underwood examines the origins of the horseback herders of Mexico and the Southwest in "The Vaquero." This initial chapter traces the contributions of the Arabs, Berbers, Moors, and Spanish that coalesced as the vaquero on the Plains of Mexico in the sixteenth century. The author then ably describes the trademarks of vaquero culture as they appear today on the ranches of northern Mexico and south Texas.

Lawrence Clayton readily acknowledges the Anglo-American adaptation of the horseback ways of the vaquero in the genesis of the cowboys of the Southwest and on the Southern Plains. His chapter, "The Cowboy," interprets the evolution of the cowboy, his gear, working style, and migration north as the range cattle industry expanded across the Great Plains to the Canadian line.

In the final chapter, Jim Hoy defines the buckaroos of the arid Intermountain West, emphasizing the influence of the California vaqueros, who developed their own distinctive style of riding, working cattle, and equipment between 1769 and 1848. When the California vaqueros rode north with the early trail drives of the late nineteenth century, they introduced their way of life to a new generation of horsemen who anglicized "vaquero" into "buckaroo."

The strength of *Vaqueros, Cowboys, and Buckaroos* goes beyond documenting the gear, clothing, working customs, cuisine, and even vernacular architecture of each group. The authors emphasize how each sub-culture differs as local customs formed regional identities, which continue into the twenty-first century. Their horseback way of life is a result of variations in landscape, weather, regional materials, style, and tradition. Museum curators, collectors, and anyone interested in daily life and work on the cattle ranges of the West will find this work a welcome addition to their bookshelves. The reader new to the subject will welcome the assistance of over 130 pho-

Vaqueros, Cowboys, and Buckaroos. By Lawrence Clayton, Jim Hoy, and Jerald Underwood. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001. xvii + 274 pp. Photographs, glossary, bibliography, index. \$40.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

Perhaps the most widely recognized character in the history of the West is the American Cowboy. Across two centuries of literature, film, and even historical writing, cowboys have often been represented to the American public as stereotypical characters of the western scene. In reality these horsemen were, and still are, as varied as the landscapes in which they spent their lives. The authors of *Vaqueros, Cowboys, and Buckaroos* have created a welcome addition to a growing body of scholar-

tographs, a chart comparing the three groups, and an extensive glossary.